

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Claims 7-14 are all the claims pending in the application. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

Claims 9 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Cammarota and thereby, by incorporation, Timmons '211. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Cammarota et al '119 and thereby, by incorporation, Timmons '211.

Applicant submits that certain aspects of the claimed invention resides in that the absorbent article has the water content indicator coating layer, which is discolored when exposed to water, provided between the water vapor permeable waterproof sheet and the absorbent element, and that the water content indicator coating layer comprises a hydrophilic resin coating layer and a layer of an information mark provided on an inner surface of the hydrophilic resin coating layer.

Cammarota relates to absorbent articles having wetness indicating graphics providing an interactive training aid and discloses a liquid permeable outer layer and a liquid impermeable inner layer, and shows the active object graphics. However, Cammarota does not disclose the claimed absorbent element which is an absorbent covered with crepe paper (see elements 13 and 14 of Applicant's invention). Specifically, the absorbent 44 of Cammarota is not covered with a crepe paper. Furthermore Cammarota does not disclose a water content indicator coating layer comprises a hydrophilic resin coating layer and a layer of an information mark provided on an

inner surface of the hydrophilic resin coating layer. Although Cammarota shows various partial section views in FIGs. 9A to 9C, they are clearly different from the claimed configuration as shown, e.g., in FIG. 4 of the present Application.

Turning to Timmons, the reference relates to an absorbent pad assembly in which the pads have light-transmitting backing sheets. That is, the wetness indicating means in combination with the absorbent assembly in which the assembly comprises the absorbent pad and the light-transmitting fluid-impervious backing sheet in association with the pad. Although non-limiting embodiments of the present invention use the water content indicator coating layer corresponding to wetness indicating means, it is essentially different from the wetness indicator with the pad of Timmons. Timmons does not entirely show the construction of the water content indicator coating layer comprises a hydrophilic resin coating layer and a layer of an information mark provided on an inner surface of the hydrophilic resin coating layer.

Furthermore, Applicant incorporates herein all previous comments presented with regard to Cammarota and Timmons.

At least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claim 11 is patentable over the cited references. Also, Applicant submits that claims 8, 9 and 12-14 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Cammarota (and Timmons) in view of Ikeda et al (U.S. 2003/0148091; hereinafter "Ikeda").
Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Cammarota (and Timmons) in view of Kolfta et al. (U.S. 2003/0154904; hereinafter "Kolfta") and Yubuki et al. (U.S. 2002/0061595; hereinafter "Yubuki").

None of Ikeda, Kolfta, and Yubuki remedy the deficiencies discussed above relating to Cammarota (and Timmons). Therefore, claims 7 and 10 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 11.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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